

Message Text

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ORIGIN INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 IO-13 ACDA-12 OMB-01 /112 R

DRAFTED BY INR/REA: R G SWENSON
APPROVED BY INR/REA: H E HOROWITZ
INR/DDR: P H STODDARD
INR/RSE: M J ROOS
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R 150347Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USNATO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII 0126

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 097376

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CH, UR, PPOR

SUBJECT: PRC CONDITIONS FOR SINO-SOVIET BOUNDARY SETTLE-
MENT

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REFERENCE: MOSCOW 6662, PEKING 942

1. INR DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT CHINA, IN ITS MARCH 9 NOTE
REJECTING MOSCOW'S FEB. 24 PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVED RE-
LATIONS, SPECIFICALLY MAKES SOVIET TROOP WITHDRAWAL
FROM MONGOLIA A PRECONDITION FOR A BORDER SETTLEMENT.
(A BORDER SETTLEMENT MEANING, AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, SETTLE-

MENT OF THE TERRITORIAL DISPUTE OVER THE PROPER LOCATION OF THE BOUNDARY LINE). THE TEXT, AS RELEASED BY NCNA MAR. 25, STATES:

"IF THE SOVIET SIDE REALLY DESIRES TO IMPROVE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS, IT SHOULD TAKE CONCRETE ACTIONS THAT SOLVE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS. FIRST OF ALL, IT SHOULD SIGN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE 1969 UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE PREMIERS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES, AN AGREEMENT ON THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STATUS QUO ON THE BORDER, AVERTING ARMED CLASHES AND DISENGAGING THE ARMED FORCES OF THE TWO SIDES IN THE DISPUTED BORDER AREAS, AND THEN PROCEED TO SETTLE THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS THE BOUNDARY QUESTION; AND IT SHOULD WITHDRAW ITS ARMED FORCES FROM THE PEOPLE'S

REPUBLIC OF MONGOLIA AND FROM THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER SO THAT THE SITUATION THERE WILL REVERT TO WHAT IT WAS IN THE EARLY SIXTIES."

2. THIS NOTE APPEARS CONSISTENT WITH CHINA'S LONG-STANDING POSITION THAT THE SOVIETS MUST SIGN AN AGREEMENT ON MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO, AVOIDING CLASHES, AND DISENGAGING TROOPS FROM DISPUTED AREAS BEFORE THERE CAN BE FRUITFUL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE BOUNDARY DISPUTE. THE MORE SWEEPING DEMANDS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS FROM MONGOLIA AND FOR A GENERAL DRAW-DOWN OF SOVIET FORCES ALONG THE BORDER (SEPARATED BY A SEMICOLON, IN CONFIDENTIAL

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BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE TEXTS, FROM THE CONDITIONS ON A BOUNDARY SETTLEMENT) HAVE BEEN AND PRESUMABLY STILL ARE PRECONDITIONS FOR THE BROADER GOAL OF "NORMALIZATION" OF STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS. HUA KUO-FENG'S STATEMENT ON THESE SUBJECTS IN HIS FEB. 26 WORK REPORT IS PHRASED AND STRUCTURED ALMOST IDENTICALLY, EXCEPT THAT THE LATTER TWO DEMANDS ARE IN A COMPLETELY SEPARATE SENTENCE.

3. INR ALSO NOTES THAT PRAVDA DID NOT EXPLICITLY CLAIM THAT THE PRC NOTE HAD MADE TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM MONGOLIA A PRECONDITION FOR A BOUNDARY SETTLEMENT; IT MERELY PARAPHRASED AND ARRANGED THE CHINESE STATEMENTS IN SUCH A WAY THAT A READER MIGHT DRAW THAT CONCLUSION.

4. IN PRACTICE, HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE PEKING WILL BE LOATHE TO CONCLUDE A SETTLEMENT OF THE BOUNDARY DISPUTE IN THE ABSENCE OF A MORE GENERAL IMPROVEMENT IN STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS.

5. PEKING 942 HAS BEEN REPEATED FOR YOUR INFORMATION. CHRISTOPHER

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